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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RELATIVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF
WORD ELEMENTS IN AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION

by

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(B.S. in Education, Boston University, 1945)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

1946

June 4.1-17

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Donald D. Durrell, Dean, Boston University School of Education, and to Dr. W. Linwood Chase, Professor of Education, Boston University School of Education, for their interest and guidance in carrying out this study.

Sincere thanks and deep appreciation are extended to Dr. Helen A. Murphy, Assistant Professor of Education, Boston University School of Education, for permission to use her "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination" as a basis for this thesis. I am particularly grateful to her for the generous assistance and keen interest in the achievement of this experiment.

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INTRODUCTION

Many children have difficulty in learning to read because they lack the ability to hear likenesses and differences in words.

The following study was undertaken in an effort to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination.

Recent research studies tend to emphasize the importance of auditory discrimination as one of the skills necessary for a child to learn to read \(\frac{1}{2} \) without confusion. Monroe reported a correlation of .66 plus or minus .04 between reading achievement and scores on the auditory tests for reading readiness. This is a higher correlation than any other single score on the battery which includes visual, articulation, language, and motor tests.

She also suggests after studying the influence of poor auditory discrimination upon reading defect cases "that lack of precise auditory discrimination was found to impede the learning which involves auditory impressions.

Lack of discrimination of certain sounds may lead to confusion of words, \(\frac{3}{2} \) which in turn affects reading progress." Murphy states "that a lack of auditory discrimination, that is, power to distinguish similarities and differences in the sound of words, appears to be one cause for confusion in beginning reading" and also states, following a carefully controlled study.

Monroe, Marion, "Reading Aptitude Tests for Prediction of Success and Failure in Beginning Reading", Education, Volume 56: pp. 7-14, September, 1935.

^{2/} Monroe, Marion, Children Who Cammot Read, University of Chicago Press, 1932, pp. 93-95.

Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of the Effect of Specific Training in Auditory and Visual Discrimination on Beginning Reading", unpublished Doctor's thesis, Boston University, 1943.

"that specific training in auditory discrimination improves reading ability."

One of the chief purposes of educational investigations is to develop facts and principles which will form the basis for economical methods of learning and teaching. It seems, therefore, that since research finds auditory discrimination to be a definite ability needed for success in reading, it is necessary to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements, for, by so doing, it may be possible to economize the teaching procedure, simplify the learning procedure, and decrease the opportunity for confusion in reading.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF RELATED RESEARCH

A careful examination of educational literature seems to reveal that the amount of scientific investigation in auditory discrimination is meager compared with that of visual discrimination. However, educators working in the field of Reading Readiness today are aware of the need for auditory discrimination skills for success in reading, as evidenced by the recent research studies which emphasize the necessity of this ability for a child to learn to read without confusion. Monroe's report, made after studying the influence of poor auditory discrimination on reading defect cases, supports the contention that auditory discrimination is a necessary factor for success in reading. She claims that lack of precise auditory discrimination was found to impede the learning which involved auditory impressions, and that lack of discrimination of certain sounds could lead to confusion of words, which would, in turn, affect reading progress. Substantiating the importance of well-developed auditory discrimination skills, she also reports a correlation of .66 plus or minus .04 between reading achievement and scores on the auditory test of her reading readiness battery. This correlation is higher than any other single score in the entire test battery. After a study of reading progress in kindergarten and primary

^{1/} Monroe, Marion, Children Who Cannot Read, University of Chicago Press, 1932, pp. 93-95.

^{2/} Monroe, Marion, "Reading Aptitude Tests for Prediction of Success and Failure in Beginning Reading", Education, Volume 56: pp. 7-14, September, 1935.

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grades. Wilson et Altera conclude that the kindergarten and first grade children Who knew the most letter forms and sounds tended to be among the first to learn to read and to be the best readers, and that, conversely, the children who were ignorant of, or much confused about, letter forms and sounds tended to be very definitely the poor readers. "Accurate auditory discrimination contributes to good speech habits and to an awareness of speech sound so essential to phonetic insight", says Betts. and "in view of this fact it is clear that inaccurate auditory discrimination may contribute to lack of reading readiness or to a reading deficiency." Murphy advances the most recent conclusions regarding auditory discrimination based on an experimental study supported by statistical evidence stating that "a lack of auditory discrimination, that is, power to distinguish between similarities and differences in sound of words appears to be one cause for confusion in reading." and that "specific training in auditory discrimination improves reading ability."

An equally careful examination of educational literature reveals that as yet no reported research has been conducted to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination.

^{1/} Wilson, F., Flemming, C., Burke, A., Garrison, C.G., "Reading Progress in Kindergarten and Primary Grades", Elementary School Journal, Volume 38: pp. 442, 1938.

^{2/} Betts, Emmett A., "Factors in Readiness for Reading", Educational Administration and Supervision, Volume XXIX: pp. 199-230, April, 1943.

^{3/} Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of the Effect of Specific Training in Auditory and Visual Discrimination on Beginning Reading", unpublished Doctor's thesis, Boston University, 1943.

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An order of difficulty is usually established to determine the best and 1/most economical method of presenting material. To this end, Smith's study made in the Detroit Schools in 1926-1927 to discover the effect of children's matching ability as a factor in their first grade reading, furnished teachers with the relative order of difficulty in matching lower case letters, capital letters with capitals, and capital letters with lower case letters. Perhaps the greatest merit of this study was that the results were made available to teachers for use in their classrooms, and have been used as a basis for developing visual discrimination in the reading readiness programs and for introducing letters to children. Yale suggests the following order of difficulty in teaching elementary sounds to the deaf child:

Group I: wh. p. f. th. oo. t. ar. k. ou. and s.

Group II: v, th, m, n, b, d, g, h, y, w, z, l, r, ng, qu, x, ch, j, zh.

Group III: aw, ee, o-e, oo, -u-, -i-, -o-, i-e, oi, -a-, u-e, ur, -e-, a-e.

She states that "if sounds are presented in the order outlined, confusion which is brought about by attempting to learn at the same time elements too closely resembling each other, will be eliminated." No reference is made,

however, to statistical evidence to support this statement.

^{1/} Smith, Nila B., "Matching Ability as a Factor in First Grade Reading",

Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 19: pp. 560-571,

November, 1928.

^{2/} Yale, Caroline A., Formation and Development of Elementary English
Sounds, Metcalf Printing & Publishing Co., Northampton, Mass.,
1938, 46 pages.

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Goldstein also suggests an order of presenting vowels and consonants to the deaf child, as follows:

a (r) as in father; o (o-e) as in old; e (ee) as in eel; u (oo) as in pool; a (a-e) as in ale.

Dipthongs: oi, ou, ie, ae, ee, oo.

Consonants and Syllables: m, n, sh, f, k, t, r, b,

but again, no reference is made to statistical validation of the suggested method.

Murphy found in analyzing results of a test of auditory discrimination given to children who had no training, as well as to those who had a year of training, to find the relative order of difficulty of the various functions measured, that initial sounds were the easiest to determine, initial blends followed, then rhymes, and finally final consonants.

The most recent reference to an order of teaching is made by 3/
Harrison who says that the first six consonants she would introduce are m, f, s, t, hard c, and b. Here again, no reference is made to any statistical evidence to support the suggested order of presentation.

^{1/} Goldstein, Max A., The Accoustic Method, The Laryngoscope Press, St. Louis, 1939, pp. 112-115.

^{2/} Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of the Effect of Specific Training in Auditory and Visual Discrimination on Beginning Reading", unpublished Doctor's thesis, Boston University, 1943.

^{3/} Harrison, M. Lucile, "Developing Readiness for Word Recognition", Elementary English Review, Volume XXIII: p. 126, March 1946.

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Research in this field appears to be scant, and investigators seem to be handicapped by the lack of suitable means of detecting and measuring auditory discrimination.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to attempt to locate a satisfactory instrument to measure auditory discrimination, and from an analysis of the results of this test, to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS

Previous research has indicated that auditory discrimination skills are necessary for success in reading, and that these skills can be taught. With this in mind, it seemed economical and wise to attempt to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination, with the ultimate goal in view of simplifying the teaching and learning procedures. In order to satisfactorily and accurately measure the untrained abilities of children in auditory discrimination, it is necessary to test them at the very beginning of their school experience, for at that level it is assumed that as yet they have had no opportunity to acquire discrimination skills through formalized teaching.

To initiate the study, it was necessary to locate an instrument which would test auditory discrimination of initial sounds, initial blends, rhymes, and final consonants, and which would yield a reliable measure of auditory discrimination and allow a meticulous and refined analysis of the results.

A careful study of the available published group tests of reading readiness in an effort to locate those which included specific tests of auditory discrimination disclosed the following findings:

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of the Effect of Specific Training in Auditory and Visual Discrimination on Beginning Reading", unpublished Doctor's thesis, Boston University, 1943.

(2) (3)

In her auditory test, or word discrimination test, Monroe has nine pictures with the numbers 1, 2, and 3 under each. The child circles the number corresponding to his idea of the best way to say the name of each picture. This test is designed to measure ability to discriminate correct pronunciation of words. As part of this test, an exercise is given in which the examiner sounds out words and the children circle the word which they think has been sounded. The function of this exercise is to test ability to discriminate sounds accurately, and ability to blend sounds in word building.

Gates uses the ability to rhyme as his method of testing auditory discrimination. The children are given a test consisting of fourteen rows of four pictures each, and are told the name of each picture if they cannot correctly identify it. There is a stimulus word for each row of pictures, and the children mark the picture of the word which rhymes with the stimulus word.

The Lee Clark Reading Readiness Test measures visual perception by requiring the children to match letters, and it tests even a finer sense

^{1/} Monroe, Marion, "Reading Aptitude Tests", New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935.

^{2/} Gates, Arthur I., "Gates Reading Readiness Tests", New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1939.

Lee, J. Murray and Clark, Willis W., "Reading Readiness Test", Los Angeles, California Test Bureau, 1931.

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of visual discrimination by giving specific words and instructions to cross out the letter that does not belong in the word. For example:

bear be sar

The Metropolitan Readiness Test measures visual perception in its first two sub-tests and vocabulary, number information, general information, and motor skills in the remaining five sub-tests. No evidence is given of a specific test of auditory discrimination.

Visual discrimination, listening, comprehending, recalling and retelling a story, and visual-auditory recall are the skills measured by the 2/Stevens Reading Readiness Test. Again no evidence is given of a specific test of auditory discrimination.

In the study made by Sullivan and McCarthy in which they evaluated five reading readiness tests, it was found that only two of these tests included any auditory items, and neither of those required discrimination of sounds.

As indicated by the above review, no published test was available which could be satisfactorily used to measure auditory discrimination ability,

^{1/} Hildreth, Gertrude H. and Griffiths, Nellie L., "Metropolitan Readiness Test", New York, World Book Co., 1933.

^{2/} Stevens, Avis C., "Stevens Reading Readiness Test", Columbus, Ohio, American Education Press, Inc., 1938.

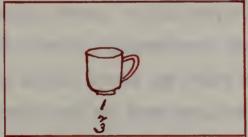
^{3/} Sullivan, Helen Blair, and McCarthy, J., "An Evaluation of Reading Readiness Materials", Education, LXII, September 1941, pp. 40-43.

The initial form of this test was suggested by the Monroe Reading 2/Aptitude Test.

Twenty-four words which could be easily illustrated by pen and ink drawings were selected from the International Kindergarten Union Vocabulary 3/
Test. Each of the twenty-four words were grouped with two other words of somewhat similar sound. Beneath each of the twenty-four pictures, the figures 1, 2, and 3 appeared in a column, as illustrated below:

Figure I

Item from Preliminary Form of Murphy Group Test of Auditory Discrimination



Some of the words chosen to complete the groups had similar initial but different final sounds. For example: cup, cut, cud. Some of the words sounded alike at the beginning and end but had a slight difference in the middle, as horse, house, hose. Others were similar at the end and different at the beginning—witch, which, rich. A copy of the complete test with directions for administering may be found in Appendix A, page 33.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test, Boston University, 1941.

^{2/} Monroe, Marion, "Reading Aptitude Tests", New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935.

^{3/ &}quot;A Study of the Vocabulary of Children Before Entering the First Grade", International Kindergarten Union, Washington, D.C., 1928.

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In the light of the findings of the study in which this form of the test was used. a new instrument was built to include specific tests of initial sounds, final sounds, and rhymes. The test consisted of forty rows of pictures, four in each row. Initial sounds were tested in the first twenty rows, final sounds in the next ten rows, five rows of beginning blends were next, and finally there were five rows testing rhymes. The International Kindergarten Vocabulary List and several first grade basal readers were analyzed for frequency of words common to first grade vocabulary. and this compilation was the basis from which all the words used as guide words, as well as those illustrated in the pictures, were taken. Every letter of the alphabet, with the exception of o, q, u, x, y, and z, was included in the test of initial sounds. In each row, at least two of the four words began with the same sound as the guide word. Some rows had three pictures characterized by similar sounds, and others had four. The first word in each row corresponded with the guide word, and because of its position, the first word might be correctly discriminated more often, but this is merely an assumption for there is no evidence to support it. The incorrect words were placed in varied positions to avoid the possibility of establishing a pattern. A copy of this form of the test with directions for administering may be found in Appendix A. page 39.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of Exercises for Developing Auditory Discrimination", unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1940.

^{2/ &}quot;A Study of the Vocabulary of Children Before Entering the First Grade",
International Kindergarten Union, Washington, D.C., 1928.

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The test as described was administered in mimeographed form in June to 1/
the same population to which the first form was given to determine the
suitability of the technique for classroom administration. The results were
encouraging since the children were able to follow the directions, and they
seemed to enjoy the game. The scoring of the test was by rows. For each
entirely correct row, one point was allowed.

In September the test was given to twenty-six children just beginning the first grade. It was found to require approximately thirty-five minutes to administer, and appeared interesting enough to the children so that they were willing to actively enter into the completion of the task. The group results of this test and the results mentioned above (the tests given in June) were analyzed to find the relative order of difficulty of the various functions which the test attempted to measure. Table I shows the results of this analysis.

TABLE I
ERRORS ON AUDITORY TEST

Function	Percent of Error		
	Group I	Group II	
nitial Sounds	14.8	23.0	
nitial Blends	20.0	32.0	
hyme s	26.0	31.0	
Final Consonants	39.0	40.0	

The initial sounds in each case had the fewest errors, the initial blends were next, rhymes followed, and finally the most difficult were final consonants.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "An Evaluation of Exercises for Developing Auditory Discrimination", unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1940.

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With this analysis as a basis, the test was revised and all vowels as initial sounds were omitted. The initial blends were placed after the initial consonants. The final sounds were next, and then rhymes. This arrangement made it necessary to give the directions only once for initial sounds and once for final sounds. The revised form of the test consists of four practice rows - namely, b, c, d, and f, for initial sounds; twelve rows testing initial consonants - namely, g, h, j, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w, and v; five rows testing initial blends - namely, ch, sh, tr, sp, and st; one practice row of final consonants - namely, m; nine rows of testing final consonants - namely, y, n, t, g, d, s, k, l, and p; and five rows testing rhymes - namely, ing, un, at, an, and, making thirty-six rows in all.

The test just described - The Group Test of Auditory Discrimination, seemed to provide an opportunity to accurately test the auditory discrimination abilities of children, and was therefore selected as the test to be given, the results and analysis of which constitute this thesis.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test, Boston University, 1941.

CHAPTER III

PLAN OF EXPERIMENT

The Group Test for Auditory Discrimination designed by Murphy was selected as the instrument to be used to measure auditory discrimination, and the results of this test were analyzed to establish the relative order of difficulty of word elements.

Definition of Terms

In this study <u>auditory discrimination</u> is defined as the ability to perceive similarities and differences in the sound of words.

In this study word element is defined as "(1) any part of a word that constitutes an irreducible minimum; a letter; (2) any part of a word that cannot be reduced for practical purposes, such as the suffix ing; (3) any part of a word, such as a phonogram or syllable, that aids the reader in understanding the pronunciation and meaning of the word."

Selection and Status of Population

The Director of Parochial Schools of a large Eastern city agreed to open four of his schools, and the Superintendent of Public Schools opened three of his schools so that the testing program could be conducted.

- Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test. Boston University, 1941.
- 2/ Good, Carter V., Editor, <u>Dictionary of Education</u>, New York, McGraw Hill Company, Inc., 1945.

The testing program was begun the second day of school, in September.

The tests were administered to two hundred and thirty-seven children in

seven first grade classrooms. The Detroit Beginning First Grade Intelligence

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Test and the Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test were given and the scores

were averaged to obtain the mental ages of the children. The Lee-Clark

3/

Reading Readiness Test, a standard test with norms, was given to serve as

a stabilizing instrument since the group test used in the experiment was

unstandardized. The Group Test for Auditory Discrimination was then

administered and the results were analyzed to determine the relative order

of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination. The data are

reported in Chapter IV of this thesis.

^{1/} Published by World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1937.

^{2/} Published by World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1939.

^{3/} Published by California Test Bureau, Los Angeles, California.

^{4/} Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test, Boston University, 1941.

^{5/} Loc. cit.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of the study was to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination.

The results of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination were analyzed to find:

- 1. The relative order of difficulty of initial sounds.
- 2. The relative order of difficulty of initial blends.
- 3. The relative order of difficulty of final consonants.
- 4. The relative order of difficulty of rhymes.
- 5. The relationship in the order of difficulty of those letters used as both beginning and final consonants.

Data obtained from the Detroit Beginning First Grade Intelligence $\frac{2}{2}$ Test and the Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test were analyzed to find the mean mental ages of 237 children used in this experiment. The mean chronological age for those children was also computed. The mean score of the $\frac{4}{2}$ Lee Clark Reading Readiness Test was found for this same population.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test, Boston University, 1941.

^{2/} Published by World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1937.

^{3/} Published by World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1939.

^{4/} Published by California Test Bureau, Los Angeles, California.

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The results of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination were also analyzed for the mean score.

Table II shows the mean chronological and mental ages of the 237 children used in this experiment.

TABLE II

]	MEAN CHRONOL	OGICAL AND D	ÆNTAL AG	ES OF THE G	ROUP STU	ID IED
	Number	Mean C.A.	S.D.	Mean M.A.	S.D.	
	237	72.52	4.80	71.15	7.75	

The mean chronological age for the 237 children in the experiment was 72.52. The mean mental age for these same children was 71.15. Since there is only a difference of 1.37 months between the mean chronological and mental ages, this suggests that the population was normal.

^{1/} Murphy, Helen A., "Group Test for Auditory Discrimination", unpublished test, Boston University, 1941.

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Table III shows the mean score on the Lee Clark Reading Readiness
Test.

TABLE III

MEAN SCORE OF GROUP STUDIED ON LEE CLARK TEST								
	Number	Mean	S.D.					
	237	26.76	11.61					

The mean score on the Lee Clark Reading Readiness Test for the group studied was 26.76.

Table IV shows the mean score on the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination for this same group. The total possible score was 124.

TABLE IV

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Number	Mean	S.D.	
237	70.05	19.94	

The mean score of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination for this group was 70.05. The range of the test was from 12 to 115.

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Table V shows the relative order of difficulty of initial consonants as computed from the analysis of the results of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination.

TABLE V

RELATIVE ORDER O	F DIFFICULTY OF INITIA	L CONSONANTS BASED O	N 237 CASES
Consonant	Per Cent of Error	Probable Error o	f Per Cent
g	.161	.024	
r	.208	•026	
h	.221	.027	
S	•229	•027	
р	•244	•028	
j	,247	•028	
n	•249	•028	
t	.260	•028	
1	•279	.029	
m	•289	•029	
▼	.293	•029	
W	.295	•030	

This table shows that "g" is the easiest initial consonant for auditory discrimination for this group. "W" is the most difficult initial consonant. "R" is more difficult than "g" though not as difficult as "h". Both "h" and "s" are similarly difficult to distinguish but "s" is the more difficult of the two.

^{1/} Edgerton, H.A., and Patterson, D.G., "Table of Standard Errors and Probable Errors of Percentages for Varying Numbers of Cases",

Journal of Applied Psychology, Volume 10: pp. 378-391,

September, 1926.

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"P", "j", and "n" are more difficult than "s" but the three are relatively difficult. "T" is more difficult than "n" and "l" is more difficult than "t". The "m" sound is more difficult than "l" as evidenced by its position in the order of difficulty of the tenth most difficult sound. "W" and "v" are the most difficult to distinguish and the two are of approximate equality in difficulty.

Table VI shows the relative order of difficulty of initial blends as derived from the analysis of the results of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination.

TABLE VI

RELATIVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF INITIAL BLENDS BASED ON 237 CASES						
Initial Blends Per Cent of Error Probable Error of Per Cent						
ch	.201	•026				
sp	.223	.027				
tr	•226	.027				
st	•228	.027				
sh	•284	.029				

Table VI shows that of the blends included in the test "ch" is the easiest.

"Sh" is the most difficult. It will be noted that "ch" as the least difficult blend is more difficult than "g" which is the easiest initial consonant. The blend "sp" is considerably more difficult than "ch" but is of similar difficulty to "tr" and "st". The most difficult blend, "sh", is approximately comparable to "w" and "v", the most difficult initial consonants.

1/ Edgerton, H.A., and Patterson, D.G., "Table of Standard Errors and Probable Errors of Percentages for Varying Numbers of Cases",

Journal of Applied Psychology, Volume10: pp. 378-391,

September, 1926.

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Table VII shows the relative order of difficulty of final consonants

as computed from the analysis of the results of the Group Test for Auditory

Discrimination.

TABLE VII

RELATIVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF FINAL CONSONANTS BASED ON 237 CASES						
Final Consonant	Per Cent of Error	Probable Error of Per Cent				
У	•282	•029				
s	•289	•032				
t	•306	•030				
k	•311	•030				
1	•324	•030				
n	•395	.032				
g	•406	•032				
р	•424	.032				
đ	•426	•032				

The final consonant "y" is the easiest to discriminate while "d" is the most difficult. "S" is fairly comparable to "y" but it is interesting to note that both "s" and "y" as relatively easy final consonants are equal to the most difficult initial consonants. "T" is more difficult than "s" and "k" is more difficult than "t". "N" is much more difficult than "l" and "g" is more difficult than "n". "P" and "d" are the most difficult final consonants and they are considerably more difficult than "g". All but the first two final consonants - namely, "y" and "s" are more difficult than the most difficult initial consonants.

^{1/} Edgerton, H.A., and Patterson, D.G., "Table of Standard Errors and Probable Errors of Percentages for Varying Numbers of Cases",

Journal of Applied Psychology, Volume 10: pp. 378-391,
September, 1926.

Table VIII shows the relative order of difficulty of rhymes as computed from the analysis of the results of the Group Test for Auditory Discrimination.

TABLE VIII

RELAT	IVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY O	F RHYMES BASED ON 237 CASES
Rhymes	Per Cent of Error	Probable Error of Per Cent
ing	•151	•023
an	•233	•027
un	•239	• 028
and	.257	•028
at	•266	•029

This table shows that of the rhymes included in the test, the phonogram "ing" is very much easier than any of the others. "At" is noticeably more difficult. The phonogram "ing" is easier than the initial consonant "g" to distinguish. "An and "un" are fairly comparable in difficulty and follow "ing" in the order established above. "And" is more difficult than "un" and is more difficult than the initial blend, "st". "At" is the most difficult rhyme to distinguish but it is wise to recognize that it is easier to distinguish than even the least difficult final consonant.

^{1/} Edgerton, H.A., and Patterson, D.G., "Table of Standard Errors and Probable Errors of Percentages for Varying Numbers of Cases", Journal of Applied Psychology, Volume 10: pp. 378-391, September, 1926.

Table IX shows the relative order of difficulty of those letters used as both beginning and final consonants.

TABLE IX

RELATIONSHIP IN THE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF THOSE LETTERS USED AS BOTH BEGINNING AND FINAL CONSONANTS BASED ON 237 CASES

Alphabetical order of letters	g	1	n	p	8	t
Per cent of error as beginning consonants	.162	•2 7 9	.249	.245	•229	.260
Per cent of error as final consonant	•406	•324	•395	.424.	.289	•306

Table X shows the relative order of difficulty in numerical order of those consonants used as final and initial in this study.

TABLE X

RELATIVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY IN NUMERICAL ORDER OF THOSE CONSONANTS USED AS BOTH BEGINNING AND FINAL CONSONANTS BASED ON 237 CASES

Alphabetical order of letters	g	1	n	p	S	t
Beginning Consonants in numerical order of difficulty	1	6.	4	3	2	5
Final Consonants in numerical order of difficulty	5	3	4	6	1	2

Table IX and Table X show the relative order of difficulty of the beginning consonants in relation to the relative order of difficulty of the final consonants. It is interesting to observe that the easiest final consonant in this grouping has a higher per cent of error than the most difficult

beginning consonant. The sound "s" seems to be the easiest to distinguish both in final and initial consonants. While "g" is the easiest initial consonant, it is the second most difficult final consonant. "L" is just twice as easy to distinguish when it is a final consonant as when it is a beginning consonant. "N" remains in the same position both as an initial and final consonant. "P" as an initial consonant is twice as easy to distinguish as it is when used as a final consonant. "T" is much more difficult to distinguish as a beginning consonant than as a final consonant.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to establish a relative order of difficulty of word elements in auditory discrimination.

A Group Test for Auditory Discrimination was administered during the first week of school, in September, to 237 children in seven first grades. The test was designed to measure untrained abilities in auditory discrimination, and the results of the tests were analyzed in an effort to establish the following orders of difficulty:

- 1. The relative order of difficulty of initial sounds.
- 2. The relative order of difficulty of initial blends.
- 3. The relative order of difficulty of final consonants.
- 4. The relative order of difficulty of rhymes.
- 5. The relationship in the order of difficulty of those letters used as both beginning and final consonants.

CONCLUSIONS

The Relative Order of Difficulty of Initial Sounds

In this study "g" was found to be the easiest initial consonant in auditory discrimination for the group tested. "W" was found to be the most difficult initial consonant. "R" was found to be more difficult than "g", though not as difficult as "h". Both "h" and "s" were found to be similarly difficult to distinguish, but "s" the more difficult of the two. "P", "j", and "n" were found to be more difficult than "s", but the three appeared to be relatively difficult. "T" was found to be

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more difficult than "n", and "l" more difficult than "t". The
"m" sound was found to be more difficult than "l". "W" and "v"
were found to be the most difficult initial consonants to distinguish, and the two appeared approximately equal in difficulty.

The Relative Order of Difficulty of Initial Blends

In this study "ch" was found to be the easiest of the initial blends tested. "Sh" was found to be the most difficult. "Ch", the least difficult blend was found to be more difficult than "g", the easiest initial consonant. The blend "sp" was found to be more difficult than "ch", but of similar difficulty to "tr" and "st". The most difficult blend, "sh", was found to be approximately comparable in difficulty to "w" and "v", the most difficult initial consonants.

The Relative Order of Difficulty of Final Consonants

In this study the final consonant "y" was found to be the easiest to discriminate, while "d" was found to be the most difficult. "S" was found to be fairly comparable to "y", but both "s" and "y" as relatively easy final consonants were found to be equal in difficulty to the most difficult initial consonants. "T" was found to be more difficult than "s" as a final consonant, and "k" more difficult than "t". "N" was found to be much more difficult than "l", and "g" more difficult than "n". "P" and "d" were found to be the most difficult final consonants. They were found to be considerably more difficult than "g". All but the first two final consonants - namely, "y"

and "s" were found to be more difficult than the most difficult initial consonants.

The Relative Order of Difficulty of Rhymes

In this study the phonogram "ing" was found to be much easier than any of the other rhymes included in the test. "At" was found to be noticeably more difficult, but even as the most difficult rhyme tested it was found to be easier to distinguish than the least difficult final consonant. The phonogram "ing" was found to be easier to distinguish than the initial consonant "g" for the group tested. "An" and "un" were found to be fairly comparable in difficulty and followed "ing" in the order established. "And" was found to be more difficult than "un" and more difficult than the initial blend "st".

The Relationship in the Order of Difficulty of Those Letters Used as Both Beginning and Final Consonants.

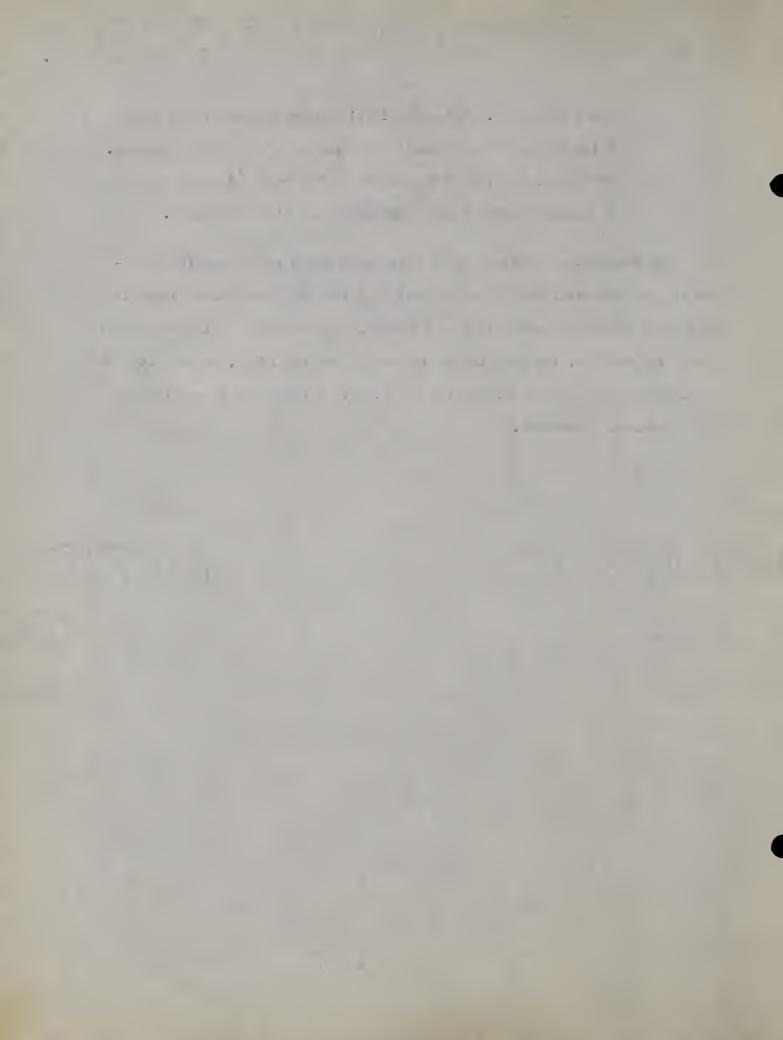
In this study six of the consonants were used and tested both as initial and final consonants. The easiest final consonant in this grouping was found to have a higher per cent of error. than the most difficult beginning consonant in the same grouping. The sound "s" was found to be the easiest to distinguish both in final and initial consonants. "G" was found to be the easiest initial consonant, and the second most difficult final consonant. "L" was found to be twice as easy to distinguish when used as a final consonant as when used as a beginning consonant. "N" was found to remain in the same position both as an initial and a

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final consonant. "P" as an initial consonant was found to be twice as easy to distinguish as when used as a final consonant.
"T" was found to be much more difficult to distinguish as a beginning consonant than when used as a final consonant.

The educational implication of this study seems to be that if the results are made available to teachers so that they may know which sounds to introduce first and where to place emphasis, and accordingly plan and adjust their instruction, the learning procedure may be simplified, opportunity for confusion may be decreased, and the opportunity for success in reading may be appreciably increased.



CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- 1. Repeat the experiment by arranging the test so that b, c, d, and f
 may be tested to determine their place in the order of difficulty.
- 2. Repeat the experiment on a larger population.
- 3. Study the order of difficulty in relation to sex differences and intelligence quotients.
- 4. Compare the method of teaching auditory discrimination just evolved with those methods suggested in teachers' manuals.
- 5. Conduct an experiment by teaching auditory discrimination through specific exercises based on and according to the order of difficulty herein determined, and measure the progress and success in reading of the experimental group with a group taught according to a method suggested in a teachers' manual.

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APPENDIX A

AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION TESTS



AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION TEST

First Form

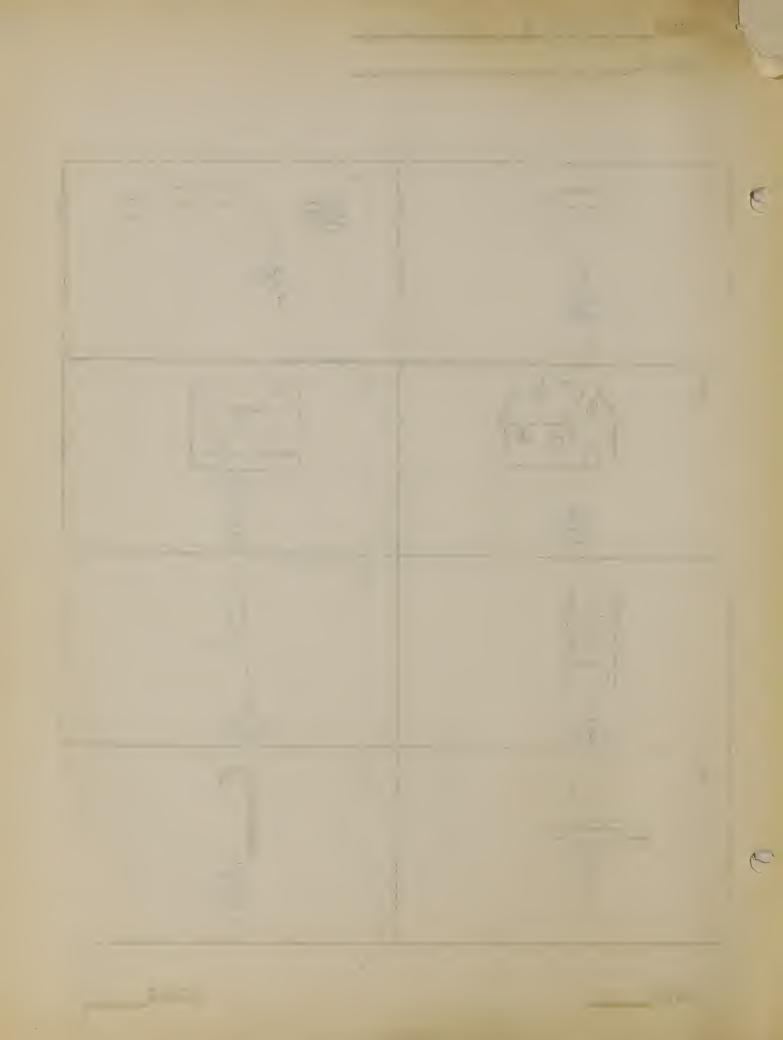
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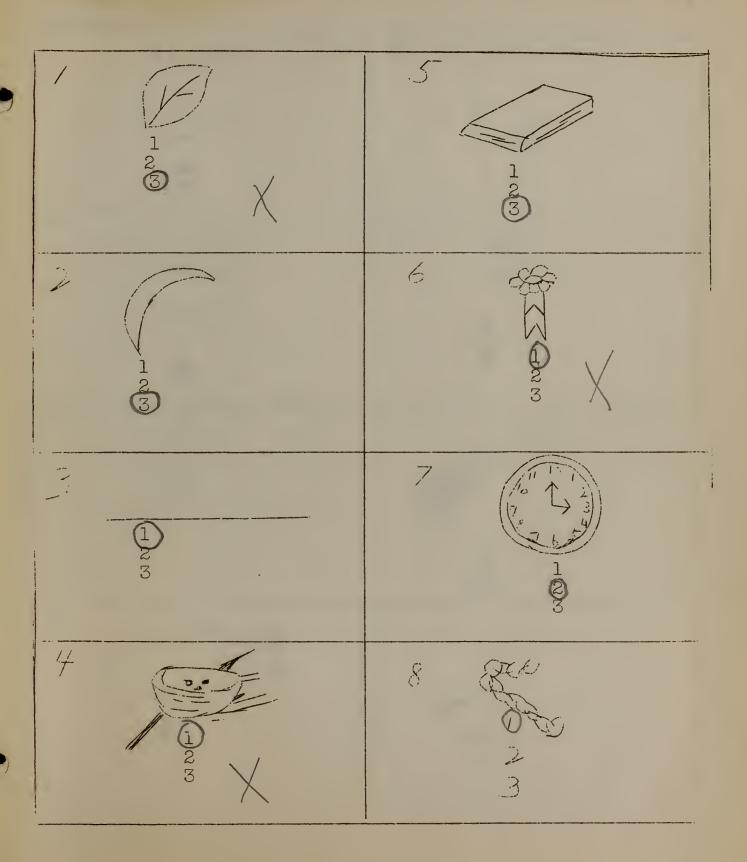


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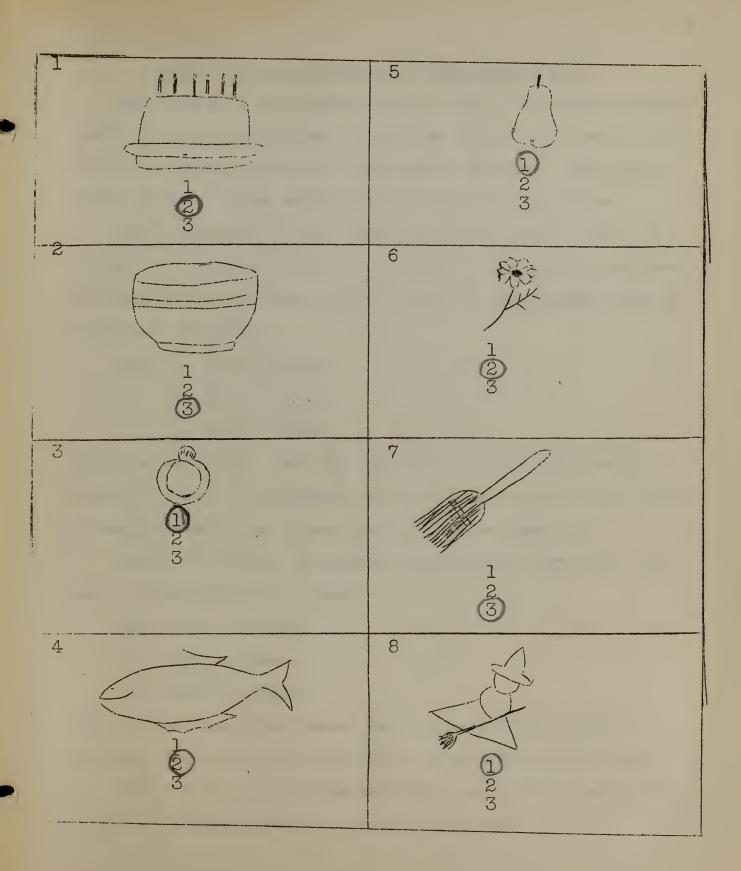
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SCORE 2











DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE GROUP AUDITORY TEST

Each child has a mimeographed copy of the test. The examiner reads the prescribed sentences, speaking distinctly, but being careful that no clue to the correct answer is given by an inflection in the voice. The children circle the number of the sentence which is correct for the picture.

Say to the children, "Let us look at the first picture. What is it a picture of? Yes, A cup. I will read three sentences to you, Listen and see which sentence is correct. The words will all sound somewhat alike so listen very carefully."

Read: 1. This is a cut.

- 2. This is a cup.
- 3. This is a cud.

"Which one was right?" "Yes, two. Put a circle around the 2 under the picture of the cup on your paper." Take time to see that each child does it correctly so that you may be sure the directions are understood.

"Now find the picture of the house. Listen while I read to you. Be sure to listen for the word house."

Read: This is a horse.

- 2. This is a hose.
- 3. This is a house.

"Which one was right? Yes, three. Put a circle around the 3 under the picture." Check each child to see that he has followed your directions.

"Now I am going to read three sentences for each of the other pictures.

I will not help you any more so listen very carefully."

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- "1. This is a letter."
- "2. This is a litter."
- "3. This is a ladder."

Picture 4

- "1. This is a hat."
- "2. This is a hatch."
- "3. This is a hats."

Picture 5

- "1. This is a fort."
- "2. This is a fork."
- "3. This is a fourth."

Picture 6

- "1. This is a drum."
- "2. This is a drawn."
- "3. This is a drown."

Picture 7

- "1. This is a camel."
- "2. This is a kettle."
- "3. This is a candle."

Picture 8

- "1. This is a came."
- "2. This is a cane."
- "3. This is a cone."

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Picture 1

- "l. This is a leaf."
- "2. This is a left."
- "3. This is a leave."

Picture 2

- "1. This is a moan."
- "2. This is a noon."
- "3. This is a moon."

Picture 3

- "1. This is a line."
- "2. This is a lion."
- "3. This is a lines."

Picture 4

- "l. This is a neck."
- "2. This is a nest."
- "3. This is a next."

Picture 5

- "1. This is a broke."
- "2. This is a back."
- "3. This is a book."

Picture 6

- "1. This is a bag."
- "2. This is a badge."
- "3. This is a bad."

Picture 7

- "1. This is a cloak."
- "2. This is a clock."
- "3. This is a close."

Picture 8

- "1. This is a chain."
- "2. This is a chair."
- "3. This is a chalk."

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Picture 1

- "l. This is a cape."
- "2. This is a cake."
- "3. This is a kate."

Picture 2

- "1. This is a ball."
- "2. This is a bell."
- "3. This is a bowl."

Picture 3

- "l. This is a ring."
- "2. This is a rang."
- "3. This is a rung."

Picture 4

- "1. This is a fit."
- "2. This is a fish."
- "3. This is a fix."

Picture 5

- "l. This is a pear."
- "2. This is a tear."
- "3. This is a bear."

Picture 6

- "1. This is a power."
- "2. This is a flower."
- "3. This is a tower."

Picture 7

- "1. This is a boom."
- "2. This is a bloom."
- "3. This is a broom."

Picture 8

- "1. This is a witch."
- "2. This is a which."
- "3. This is a rich."

The score is the number of correct items.

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AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION TEST

Second Form

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING



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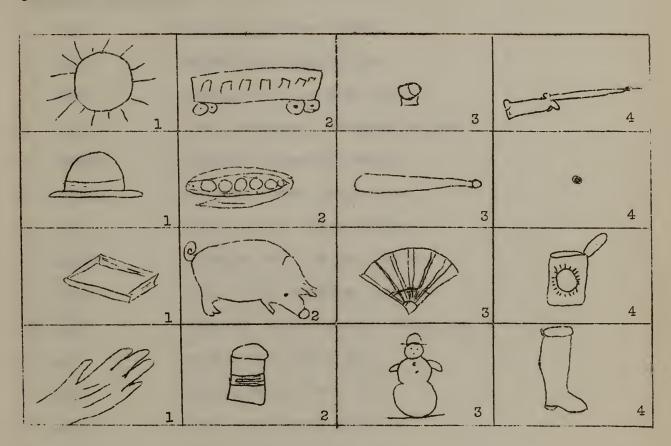
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	2	3	
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	2	3	4



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GROUP AUDITORY TEST

Beginning consonants

I am apple ar anchor arro	1.	and	apple, ax, a	nchor.	arrow
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2. bird badge, ball, basket, dish

3. cake candle, crown, square, comb

4. dance door, strawberry, doughnut, thimble

5. Eskimo egg, bell, envelope, wheel

6. father football, canoe, fruit, fish

7. go gate, glasses, grape, button

8. hammer haystack, book, signal, house

9. Irene iron, tulip, idecream, bow

10. jello jumprope, jack-o-lantern, cage, jug

11. keep kettle, key, acorn, kite

12. like ladder, table, leaf, line

13. mother mouse, box, lemon, moon

14. name nest, nail, necktie, broom

15. paint pail, soap, pear, pencil

16. red rake, peanut, rabbit, rubber

17. sing sailboat, saw, balloon, cap

18. take toys, toothbrush, bottle, tent

19. wait window, horseshoe, clothespin, windmill

20. very violin, umbrella, vegetables, vase

Final consonants

21. from arm, dress, bone, plum

22. early candy, potato, cooky, turkey

c e- e

e - e :

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e e e

c e e

23.	fern	horn,	apron,	wagon,	pipe
-----	------	-------	--------	--------	------

24. start plate, walnut, bread, automobile

25. dog bag, flag, cube, rug

26. crowd bed, bonnet, bud, sled

27. grass bus, cross, hoe, scissors

28. trick tractor, trunk, clock, fork

29. girl squirrel, lock, triangle, bowl

30. peep cup, lamp, hill, carrot

Beginning blends

31. chop chair, chicken, chain, cherries

32. shake shoe, spade, shovel, shirt

33. true truck, tree, trick, bridge

34. spell spoon, spider, butterfly, spring

35. stamp stairs, chimney, rose, star

Rhymes

36. Wing swing, king, string, pin

37. run sun, car, bun, gun

38. sat hat, peas, bat, dot

39. man pan, pig, fan, can

40. grand hand, band, snowman, boot

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AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION TEST

Third Form

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING



GROUP TEST FOR AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION FOR

GRADE I

Helen A. Murphy

Name

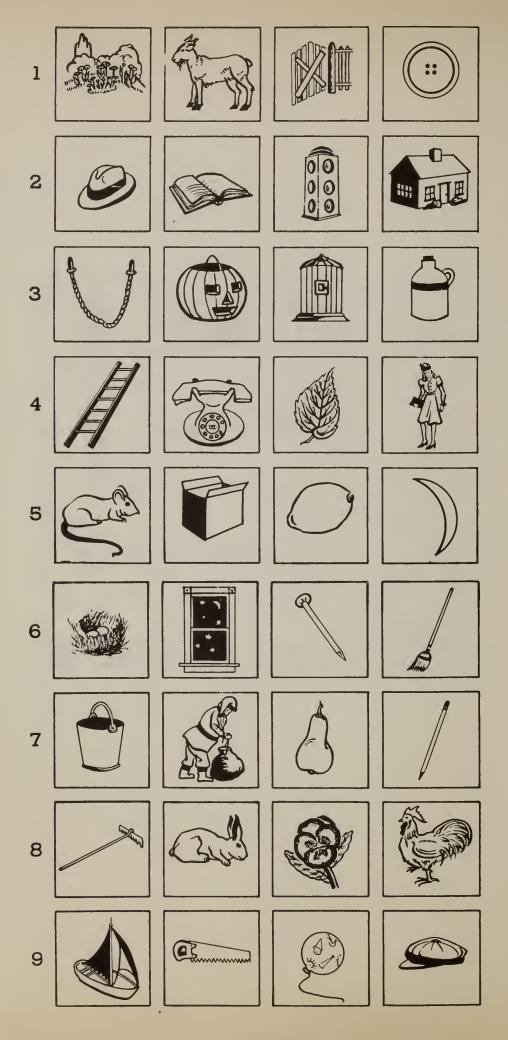
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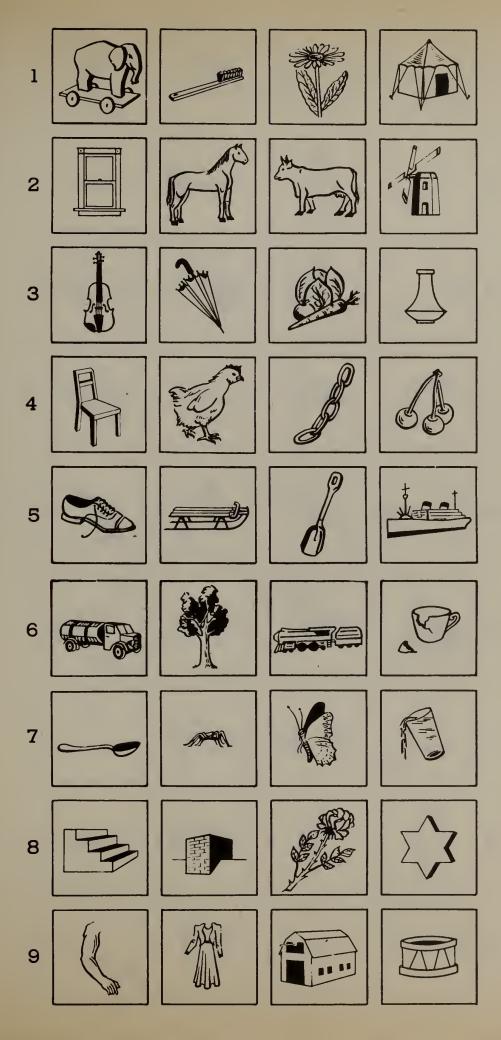
School

Date		Age	Grade
Date of birth			
	Score		
	Beginning consonants		
	Beginning blends		
	Final consonants		
	Rhymes		
	Total		



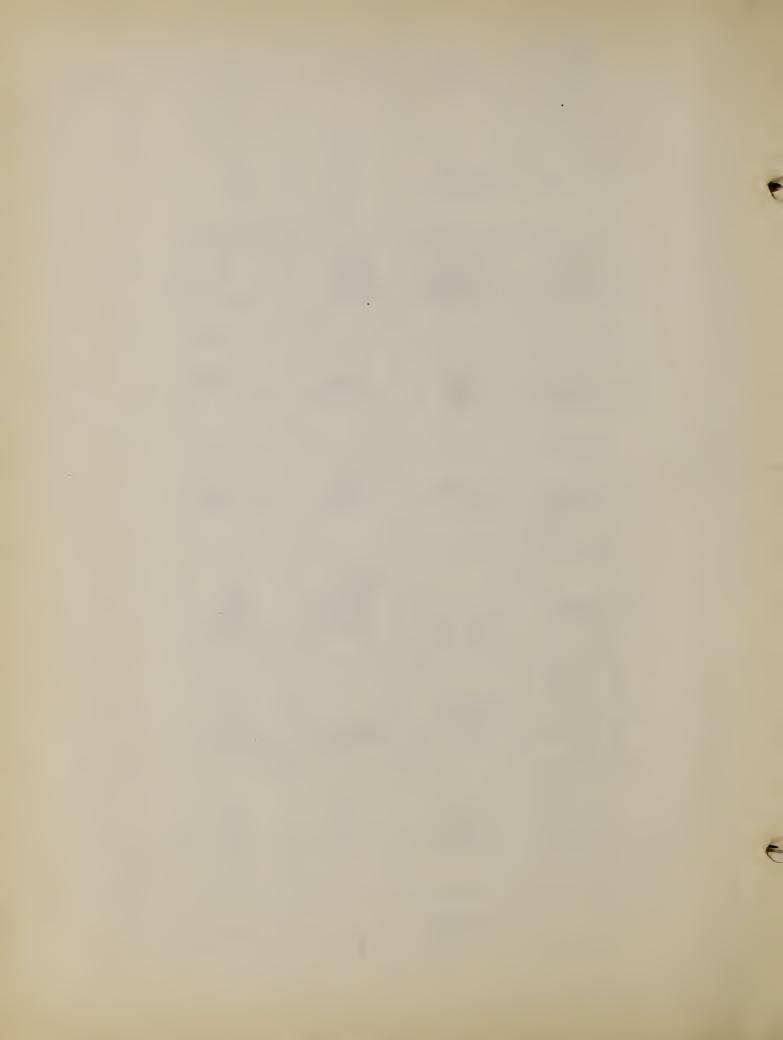












DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING AUDITORY TEST

Each child needs a copy of the test and a pencil.

Preliminary Exercise

"We are going to play a game today using our ears and our eyes. We are going to listen and watch very carefully. Listen! What sound does the engine of a train make? What sound does the wind make? What sound does an airplane make? What sound does a drum make? Listen! F, f, f, f, f. I'm going to say some words that begin with "f". You say them after me." Dictate: for, fat, fire, from, fix.

"Now open your books and fold the page back so that you can see these pictures—a bird, a ball, a basket, and a boy." Check to be sure each child has the correct page. "We are going to mark some of these pictures, but not all of them. We shall work together. Listen very carefully. Look at the picture of the bird. Listen carefully. Beet, bird. Does bird sound like beet at the beginning? Yes. Mark it like this (illustrating). Listen again. Beet, ball. Does ball sound like beet at the beginning? Mark it." Continue the same way with the other two words in the line. Check carefully to be sure all are following the directions.

"Now look at the next line! We are going to mark the things in this line that begin like cake. Listen! Cake, candle. Does candle sound like cake at the beginning? Yes, so we shall mark the candle. Listen! Cake, cat. Shall we mark the cat? Yes, mark the cat. Listen! Cake, man. Does man sound like cake at the beginning? No. We won't mark man."

"Look at the next line. This time we shall mark the things that begin like dance. Listen! Dance, dog. Do they sound alike at the beginning? Yes. So, we shall mark the dog. Listen! Dance, door. Do they sound alike at the beginning? Yes, and we'll mark the door. Listen carefully! Dance, table. Will you mark the table? No. Listen! Dance, duck. Will you mark the duck? Yes, mark the duck."

"Look at the next line. We are going to mark the things in this line that begin like <u>father</u>. Listen! Father, football. Does football begin like father? Yes, mark the football. Listen carefully! Father, canoe. Will you mark the canoe? No. Listen again. Father, fish. Will you mark the fish? Yes, mark the fish. Listen! Father, key. Will you mark the key? No."

"Look at the whole page. Did you mark every picture? No. Did you mark three pictures in every line? No. Sometimes we mark four pictures in a line, sometimes we mark two, and sometimes we mark three."

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"Turn your page and find the picture of the garden. We are going to do this whole page and I'm not going to help you any more. Be sure to listen carefully and mark only the pictures with names like the words I say. Listen carefully and watch the pictures." Give no more help. Say the word each time before the name of the picture.

Page 1. Beginning sounds.

- Row 1. go--garden, goat, gate, button
- 2. hammer -- hat, book, signal, house
- 3. jello--jumprope, jack-o-lantern, cage, jug
- 4. like--ladder, telephone, leaf, lady
- 5. mother--mouse, box, lemon, moon
- 12 6. name -- next, night, nail, broom
- 7. paint--pail, Santa, pear, pencil
- 8. red -- rake, rabbit, flower, rooster
- 9. sing--sailboat, saw, balloon, cap

Page 2. Beginning sounds.

- Row 1. take--toy, toothbrush, daisy, tent
 - 2. wait--window, horse, cow, windmill
- 3. very--violin, umbrella, vegetables, vase
- 12 4. chop--chair, chicken, chain, cherries
- 5. shake--shoe, sled, shovel, ship
- 6. true--truck, tree, train, broken
- 7. spell--spoon, spider, butterfly, spill
- 8. stamp--stairs, chimney, rose, star
- 9. Practice row for final sound. Work together. farm--arm, dress, barn, drum.

"Now we are going to mark the ones that sound alike at the end. Listen carefully."

Page 3. Final sounds.

- Row 1. early--candy, potato, cooky, turkey
 - 2. farm-horn, clown, wagon, pipe
- 3. start -- carrot, plant, bread, car
- 4. dog--bag, flag, tub, rug
- 5. crowd--bed, kite, bud, road
- 6. grass--grapes, scissors, hoe, duck7. trick--clock, truck, tractor, fork 12
- 8. girl--squirrel, lock, hill, bowl
- 9. peep--cup, lamp, face, bat

Page 4. Final sounds.

- Row 1. wing--swing, king, string, pin
- 2. run--sun, ear, bun, gun
- 3. sat -- mat, peas, bat, nut
- 4. man-pan, pig, fan, can
- 5. grand--hand, band, swim, boot

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APPENDIX B

STANDARD TESTS



DETROIT

BEGINNING FIRST-GRADE INTELLIGENCE TEST

(Revised)	No. of Test Score
By Anna M. Engel, Assistant Director, Special Education, Detroit Public Schools, and Harry J. Baker, Director, Psychological Clinic, Detroit Public Schools	1 2 3
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Published 1937 by World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, and Chicago, Illinois

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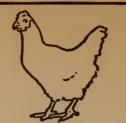
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Test 2







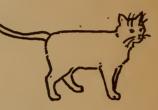


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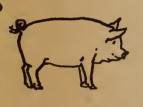








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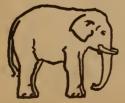








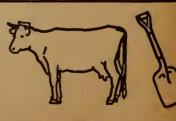




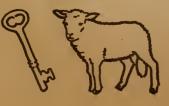












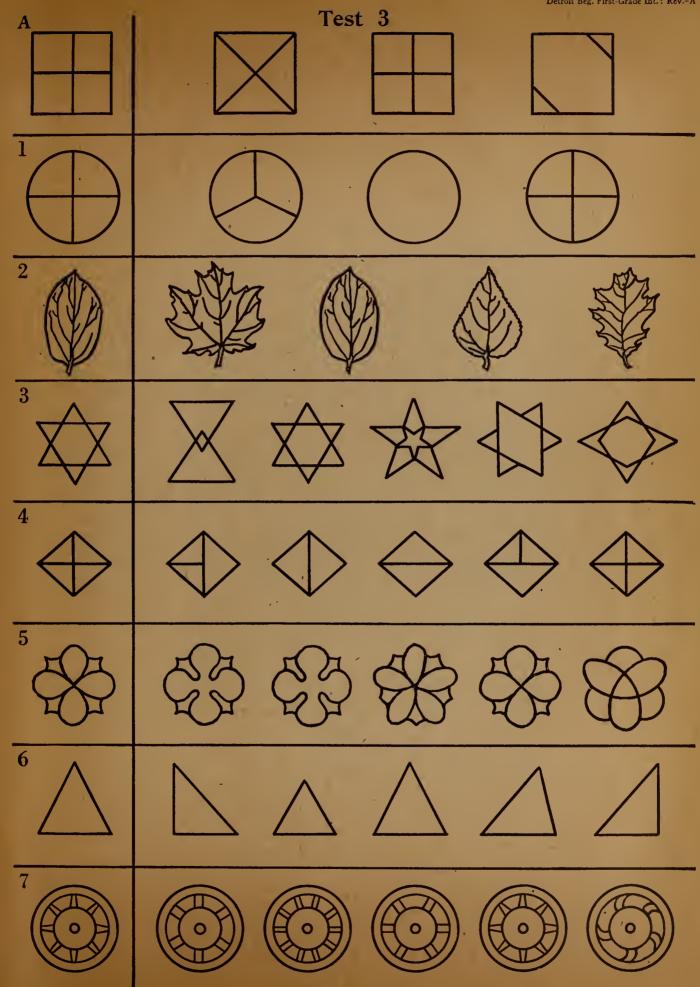




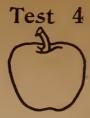




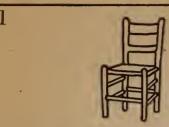






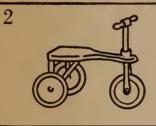




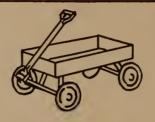
















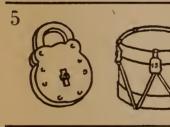






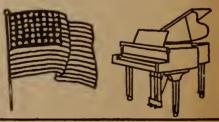


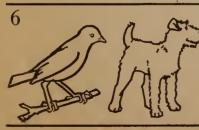


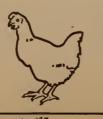
























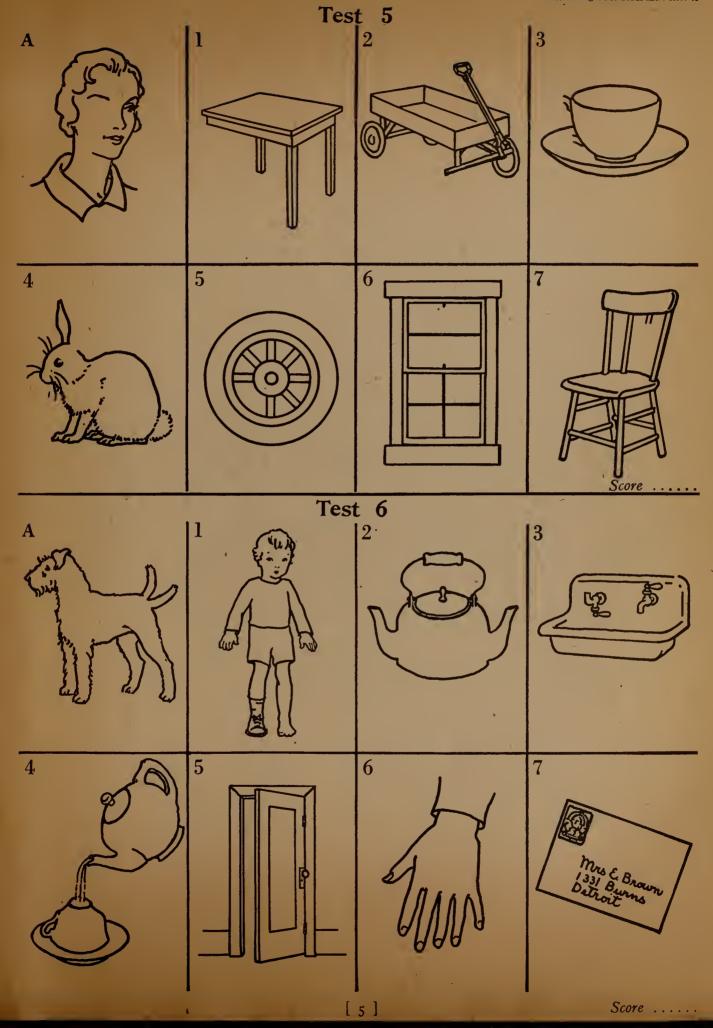


[4]











Test 7





1







2

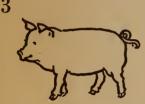






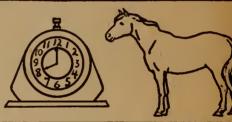


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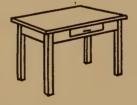


















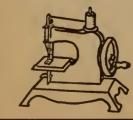






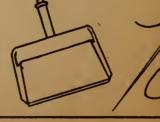


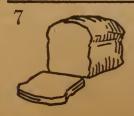
















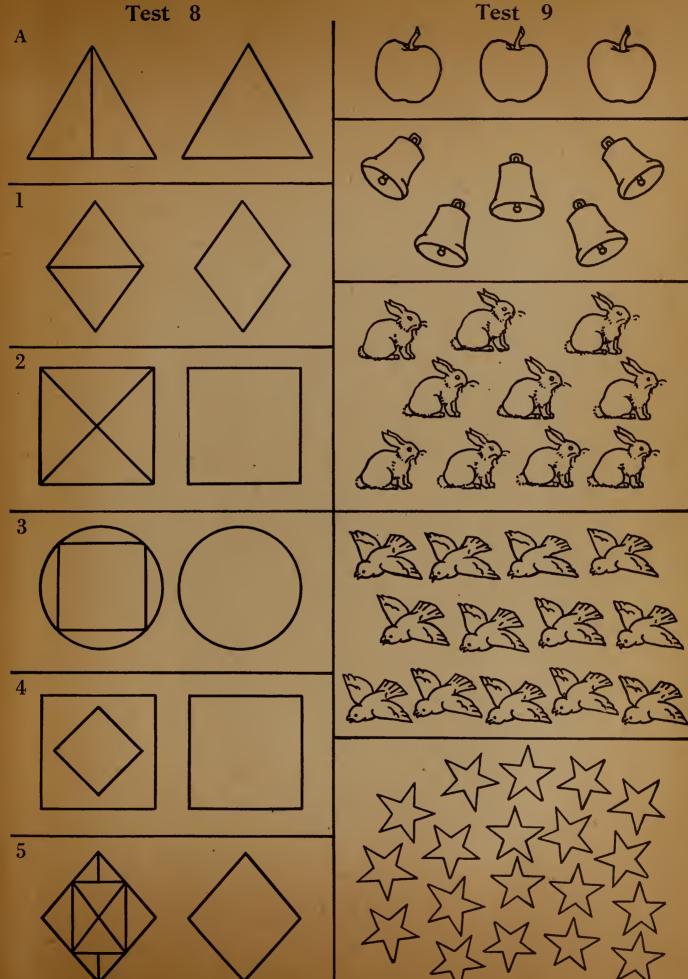








Score



Score [7]

Test 10





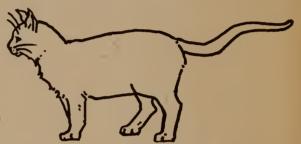
1





2





3







4









5











PINTNER GENERAL ABILITY TESTS: VERBAL SERIES

Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test: Form B

Chron.
Age
Mental
Age

By RUDOLF PINTNER, Ph.D.

Professor of Educational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University

BESS V. CUNNINGHAM, Ph.D. Professor of Education, University of Toledo

and Walter N. Durost, Ph.D.

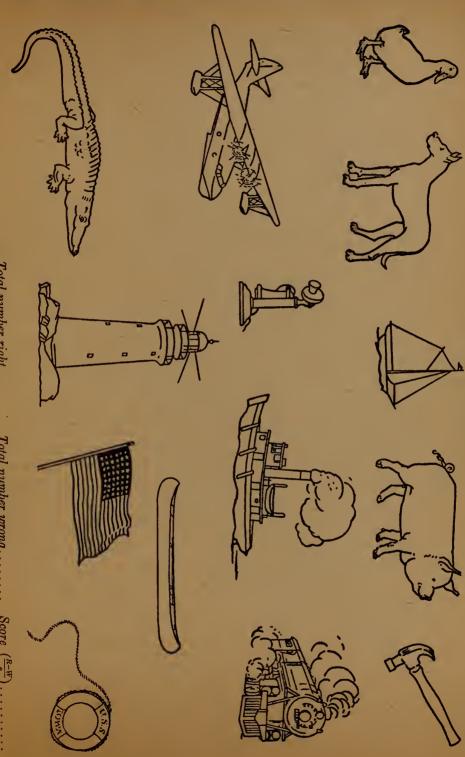
Formerly Research Associate, Institute of School Experimentation
Teachers College, Columbia University

Verball Verball

For Kindergarten and First and Second Grades

Tesr 2 2 3 3 5 6 6 6 7 7 Total

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Total number right

Total number wrong.....

Score $\left(\frac{R-W}{g}\right)$

DCOTE....







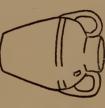


















































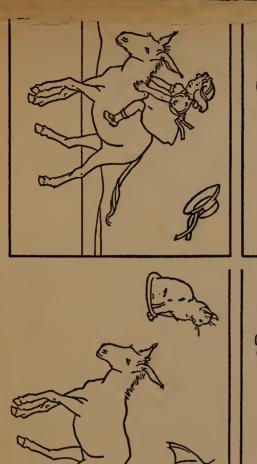






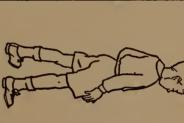






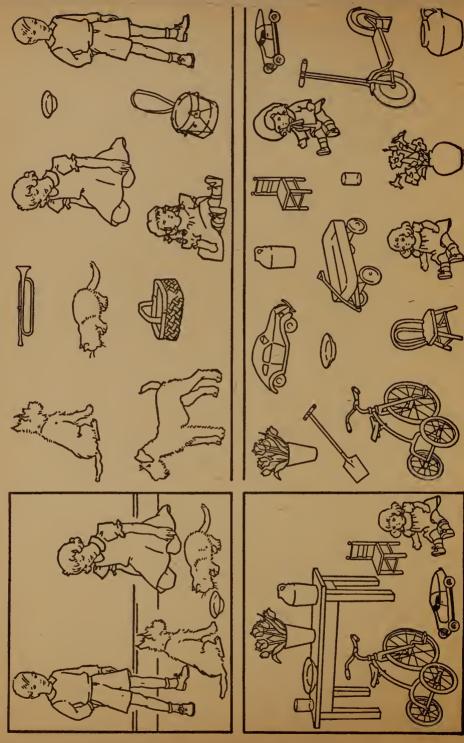


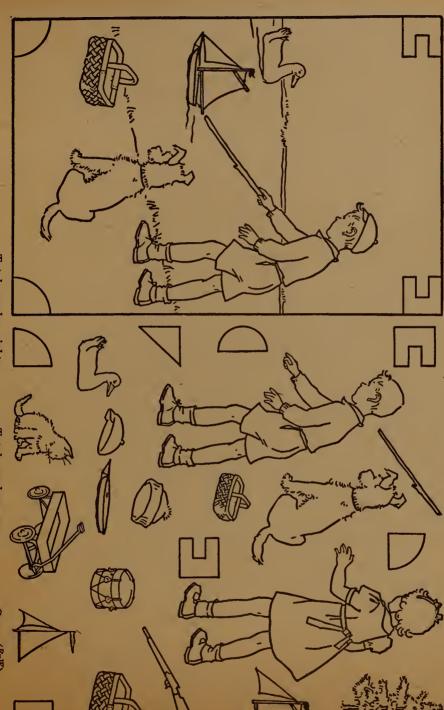








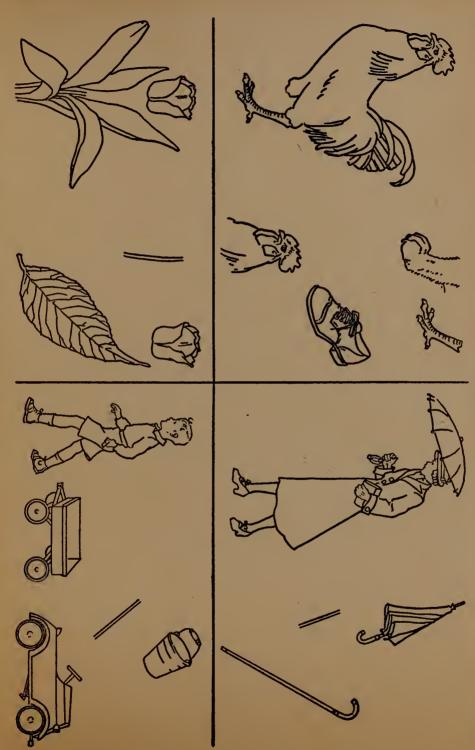




Total number right...

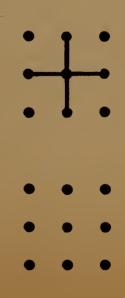
Total number wrong...

Score $\binom{R-W}{9}$



Score









Total Score	
Rating	

LEE-CLARK READING READINESS TEST

Devised by J. Murray Lee, Dean of Education, Washington State College, and Willis W. Clark, Director of Research and Guidance, Los Angeles County Schools.

Name

School

Age

City

Date

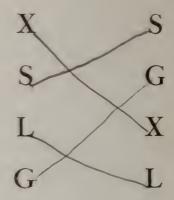
PUPIL'S RECORD

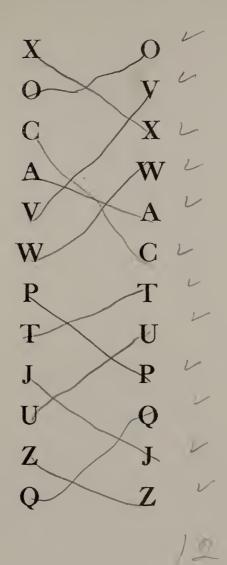
	Possible Score	Pupil's Score	Rating
Test 1. Matching	12	12	
Test 2. Matching	12	1	
Test 3. Cross Out	12	// J	
Test 4. Cross Out	14	7	
Total	50	- X	

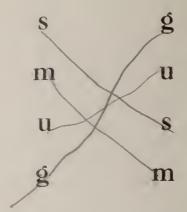
Copyright, 1931, by Southern California School Book Depository

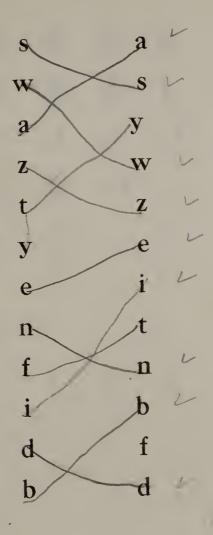
Published by California Test Bureau

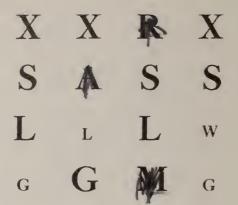
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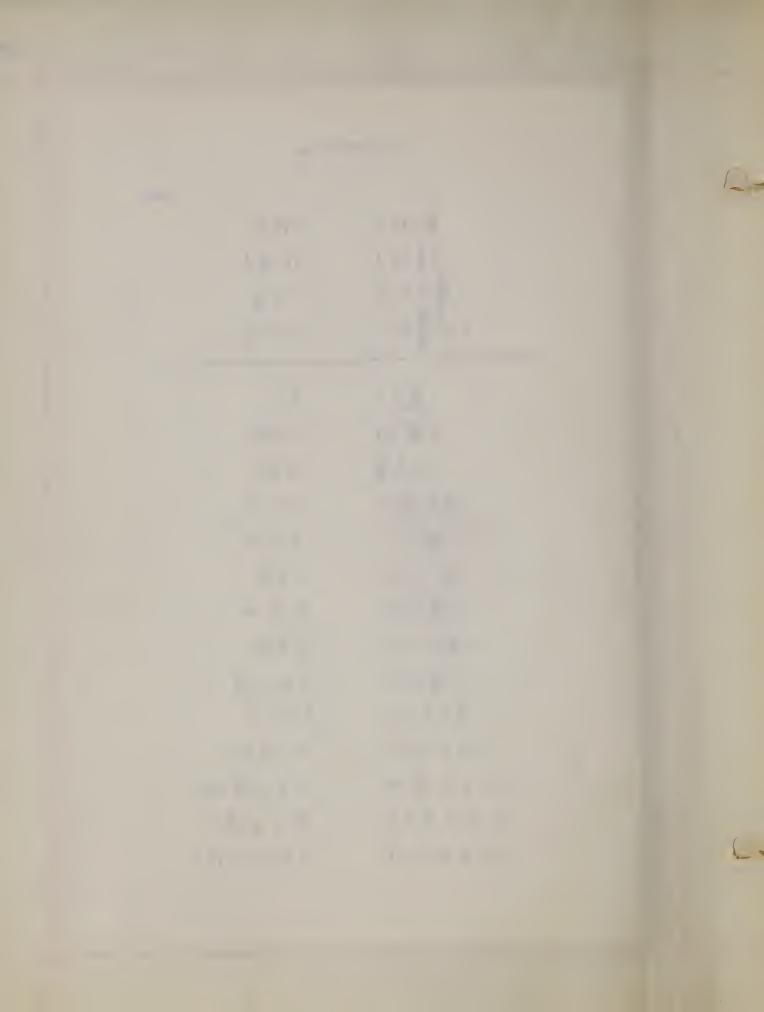
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